

Your Community Voice in the Carson

Re: FEIS & Draft ROD -

Village at Wolf Creek Access Project



Nov. 26, 2014

Don Iron - Regional Forester
US Forest Service, Region 2
940 Simms Street
Golden, CO 80401-4020

Carson Forest Watch

Box 15 Llano, NM • 87543 •
(505) 587-2848

1) Under 36 CFR 218, Subparts A and B - I am ^{objecting to} (appealing) the FEIS and ROD (Draft) for the Village at Wolf Creek Access Project for Carson Forest Watch Citizens' group.

2) Carson Forest Watch has been involved with this project since the beginning - and submitted numerous comments on all NEPA aspects of this proposal under 218.5(a).

3) We object to this Project for the following reasons:
4) as we have stated numerous times in our previous writing and DEIS comment letters - the Forest Service would violate several Federal laws and the Forest Plan by approving this destructive access project. In particular - granting such access would jeopardize numerous

"We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we will begin to use it with love and respect."

- Aldo Leopold
A Sand County Almanac

public resources of critical importance on National Forest lands.

b.) These include habitat security for Threatened & Endangered Canada Lynx, numerous forest-sensitive wildlife species, Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout, and many other species of concern.

c.) Other resources put at risk from this damaging proposal include important watershed headwaters for many downstream communities.

d.) Also at Threatened rare wetlands & soils - and critical old growth high elevation forest.

e.) of great concern is the cumulative impact of allowing the Village of Wolf Creek development. Forest Service approval of this access decision effectively allows the UWC development to proceed. This development is completely inappropriate for this area of the Rio Grande National Forest and puts at risk many irreplaceable forest resources.

f.) The adverse impacts of this Village to the public and National Forest resources - for outweigh any possible benefits of the developer. The public good has been disregarded here in favor of one private wealthy developer - a violation of the A.P.A. - Administrative Procedures Act. This was an arbitrary decision - and the Forest Service does have legal discretion to deny this access and land Exchange.



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FIS and Draft ROD for the Village of Wolf Creek Access Project (cont'd)

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- g.) This decision and land exchange are not in the public interest; the Forest Service must not rely upon inadequate mitigation measures to address resource negative impacts from the decision and access and development.
- h.) Federal law is clear that mitigation is NOT a substitute for protection and untested mitigation measures such as proposed for this decision are yet of more concern.
- i.) The mitigation measures proposed for the Village of Wolf Creek are very inadequate and simply require employee shuttles, etc. Obviating the significant overall impact of building thousands of homes (to be used for only a few months of the year, for the most part) roads infrastructure, loss of habitat and countless fragmentation depletions of water resources, pollution (including noise, light, sewage, etc) and human disturbance in one of the last intact riparian forest ecosystems on the Rio Grande forest.
- j.) For the above reasons - the Forest Service had an obligation under Federal law to deny this access project & land Exchange.

The Relationship Between Humans and Land

Land, then, is not merely soil; it is a fountain of energy flowing through a circuit of soils, plants, and animals. . . . An ethic to supplement and guide the economic relation to land presupposes the existence of some mental image of land as a biotic mechanism. We can be ethical only in relation to something we can see, feel, understand, love, or otherwise have faith in.

-Aldo Leopold, ecologist!

For the above reasons -
we strongly object to the F.E.I.S. & DROD. of the
Village at Wolf Creek access Project.

4) These objections are timely and comply with
36 CFR 218 - and 218.9.
(218.8)
also)

Sincerely,

Joanie Berke
of Carson Forest Watch
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(575) 581-2848

One additional comment is that this project
violates the Endangered Species Act regarding the
Canada Lynx. Building of the Village at Wolf Creek will
jeopardize the existing population of lynx in this
proper area and threaten its viability, remove and
fragment movement corridors necessary to lynx and
when combined with other cumulative actions - the
numerous, huge timber salvage sales and recent
fires on the forest in adjacent lynx habitat -
will threaten lynx survival on the National Forest.

Please note the current lawsuit in federal court
recently filed regarding this area of habitat
So. Colorado and No. New Mexico for Critical Habitat
of the lynx. No decision should be made
until this lawsuit is resolved.
Thank you.